



January  
2015

## West Des Moines eNewsletter



Tom Hadden, City Manager

With the new year well underway, City staff and the Mayor and Council have been busy reviewing priorities and preparing the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015. As the most important action taken by elected officials each year, the adopted budget authorizes resources and sets the direction for the programs and services we provide for you, our residents.

On Saturday, January 24, City department directors and employees gathered in the Council Chambers to share our proposed budget with the Mayor and Council. I continue to be impressed with the tremendous job everyone does to ensure that West Des Moines delivers outstanding services to our residents. As we move forward with our budget, we'll post meeting summaries on our website and on Facebook. I encourage you to follow along with our discussion

and let us know your thoughts on our efforts. I also want to thank our elected officials for their continued support in planning and directing the financial operations of the City in such a responsible and progressive manner.

### We need you for the 2015 Special Census

Another major project that will involve every resident of West Des Moines is the 2015 Special Census that we'll be conducting in the weeks ahead. Recruitment for Special Census workers will begin soon, so if you would like to apply for a job as a census enumerator, watch for more details as they are posted on our website at [www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov).

We'll also want to make sure everyone realizes how important it is to share information with census workers once they begin going door-to-door and asking their questions. It's absolutely essential that we have an accurate count so that we can make sure we're getting an appropriate level of federal funding for our community. Census workers will identify themselves by showing their official identification badges, and all information you share is confidential. We want everyone to be counted, so please tell your friends and neighbors how important it is to participate!

Connect with us! [Wdm.Iowa.Gov](http://Wdm.Iowa.Gov)





## City Manager appoints interim Fire Chief

West Des Moines City Manager Tom Hadden has appointed Deputy Chief of Operations Matthew Sonnenburg to serve as interim Fire Chief starting on January 14, 2015.

Sonnenburg will take over for Don Cox, who retired on January 16 after more than 14 years of service as Fire Chief in West Des Moines. Chief Cox has a career total of nearly 40 years in Fire/EMS service.

Sonnenburg has served as Deputy Chief of Operations with the West Des Moines Fire Department since 2003. He has been a firefighter since 1993, serving at fire stations in Clive and West Des Moines. He also served as a Fire Lieutenant for West Des Moines from 2002 to 2003, and as a Fire Lieutenant for Clive from 1996 to 2003.

The West Des Moines Fire Chief reports to the City Manager and leads a department of 56 career personnel and 45 paid-on-call firefighters. The department has an annual budget of nearly \$7.1 million and operates out of 5 stations. One station is jointly operated and funded with the City of Clive, and fire personnel respond to incidents in both cities automatically. The West Des Moines Fire Department was the first in the state of Iowa to be accredited through the Commission of Fire Service Accreditation in 2006.

### The Recruitment Process

The City of West Des Moines Civil Service Commission is responsible for the recruitment process for a new Fire Chief. The application deadline is **February 26, 2015**. All interested applicants should read the West Des Moines Recruitment Brochure and visit the City's website at [www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov) for more information.





## Frequently Asked Questions about Snow!

### 1. *How do I know when the Snow Emergency Parking Ban is in effect?*

- ◆ Call the Snow Hotline at 2730-SNO (273-0766).
- ◆ Check the home page of the WDM website at [www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov).
- ◆ On the WDM home page, sign up for eUpdates to automatically receive notices of snow emergency parking bans.
- ◆ “Like” the City of West Des Moines on Facebook.
- ◆ “Follow” the City of West Des Moines on Twitter.

### 2. *Can the City remove the snow they put in my driveway or sidewalk?*

Unfortunately, the answer is no. Given the vast number of driveways and sidewalks throughout the City, it would be very expensive for taxpayers if the City were to provide this type of service. The Public Works Department has over 770 miles of public streets to plow during storm events and this is usually done with approximately 14 operators per shift. Although we try our best to minimize the amount of snow placed on these areas, it cannot be avoided.

### 3. *Who do I call to get someone to shovel their sidewalk?*

City ordinance requires property owners to shovel their sidewalks within 24 hours after the end of a storm. Unshoveled walks can be reported to Code Enforcement at 222-3304.

### 4. *May I shovel/plow/blow the snow from my sidewalk or driveway into the street?*

No. City ordinance prohibits this activity due to the hazardous conditions it can create in the street. Violators are subject to fines.



### 5. *If I'm elderly or disabled, can the City help clean my sidewalk?*

West Des Moines Human Services offers a Handyman Program (one paid staff member) who can remove snow for income qualified households in the event of 2 inches or more of snow. This service is available to WDM elderly (60+) and medically disabled households who are at or below 180% of federal poverty guidelines. Requests for assistance are prioritized according to the following criteria:

- #1 – Low-income disabled households (medically verified)
- #2 – Low-income elderly

Note: Households must be pre-registered by Human Services with income and/or medical documentation. Staff hours for the snow removal program are Monday–Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Snow ... *continued*

While we strive to provide quality service, it's important to note that with just one employee, we cannot guarantee your sidewalk will be cleared within 24 hours. The Human Services Department works with various volunteers and community groups who assist us with snow removal when necessary. If available, staff will attempt to match these volunteers with those in need, but there is no guarantee.

For more information, contact Tami Lage, WDM Human Services, at 222-3664.

### 6. *Who should I contact if I/my group would like to volunteer to help an elderly or disabled person shovel their sidewalk?*

Human Services is always looking for volunteers to help clear snow in the winter, and we appreciate your help! Please contact the Human Services Department at 222-3660.

### 7. *When will my street be plowed?*

The City has established priorities for the various street classifications. Major arterial streets that must be kept open for emergency vehicle transportation are our highest priority. Depending on storm conditions, crews may be able to start plowing some residential streets before the storm ends. Ongoing weather conditions and the number of vehicles obstructing plow maneuverability in the roadways have a major impact on the effectiveness of snow removal. Crews may be coming down your street more than once to fully plow the snow to the curb. The City's goal is to have all paved streets completely plowed within 24 hours after the storm has ended.



## When there's snow, where do your carts go?

Garbage and recycling cart placement can be tricky during winter months. Here are some cart placement tips to keep waste and recycling removal efficient and safe for all involved.

When you shovel or plow your driveway, be sure to make a spot for your carts. Leave enough room (about 18 inches) on all sides of the cart so that the truck's arm can grab your cart and set it back down.

Do not place your cart on top of snow piles. This causes carts to tip over

and litter the street, and it also makes it difficult for collection trucks to set the cart back down. Although it might be tempting, do not place your carts in the street. Carts can get hit by vehicles or taken away by snow plows.

For more cart placement tips, and disposal and recycling options, visit Metro Waste Authority at [www.WherItShouldGo.com](http://www.WherItShouldGo.com) or call 244-0021.





## West Des Moines Police Department Receives Reaccreditation

The West Des Moines Police Department recently received its 7<sup>th</sup> accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).

The department also was awarded a *Certificate of Advanced Meritorious Accreditation* for having fully demonstrated its voluntary commitment to law enforcement excellence by living up to a body of standards deemed essential to the protection of the life, health and safety and the rights of the citizens it serves.

The WDM Police Department has been accredited by CALEA continuously since 1996. CALEA sets the standard for professional excellence and West Des

Moines continues to maintain policies and procedures that adhere to best practices in law enforcement. The Department is one of only eight agen-

cies in Iowa (Davenport, DeWitt, Dubuque, Iowa City, Muscatine, Sioux City and Urbandale) accredited by CALEA.

Residents also can be proud that West Des Moines is the only municipality in Iowa to have all three of its public safety agencies accredited.

The WDM Fire Department is accredited by the Commission

on Fire Accreditation International and WDM EMS is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services.



## West Des Moines to host Citizen Police Academy

The West Des Moines Police Department will be hosting its Citizen Police Academy from March 3 — May 26 at the West Des Moines Law Enforcement Center at 250 Mills Civic Parkway.

The academy offers a 36-hour block of instruction designed to give members of the public a working knowledge of the practices, policies and procedures governing the West Des Moines Police Department.

Twelve 3-hour sessions are conducted on a weekly basis from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., and instructors cover areas routinely addressed by law enforcement. Participants will be provided with a “hands on” experience whenever practical. A popular part of the program is a 2-hour ride-along with a patrol officer.

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older, live or work in West Des Moines, pass a background check and have no history of criminal behavior. Class size is limited to 25 individuals and the registration fee is \$25. Applications are available at the WDM Police Department or online at [www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov).

The deadline for applications is Friday, February 20, 2015.



*Please Join Us!*

## **OPEN HOUSE**

**West Des Moines Human Services** invites you to an Open House to celebrate our new location. Tour our building, meet staff members, and learn about our services!

**Date: Thursday, February 5**

**Time: 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

Light refreshments will be served.

Brief program at 5:30 p.m.

**West Des Moines Human Services**

**139 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

**West Des Moines, IA 50265**

Questions? Please call 222-3663.

## **April 30 is the deadline to apply for low-income home energy assistance**

Applications for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for the 2014-2015 program year will be accepted, through April 30, 2015, by the West Des Moines Human Services Office at their new location at 139 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

The LIHEAP program assists qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters by paying a portion of their primary heating costs. Applications will be accepted on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

For better service, applicants are encouraged to schedule an appointment in advance by calling **222- 3660**.

To apply, applicants must bring the following:

- ◆ Proof of identification in the form of Social Security cards for all household members. A photo ID is also required for the head of household.
- ◆ Proof of all household members' gross income for the past 3 months or for the past calendar year (2013 federal tax return).
- ◆ If renting, your landlord's name, address and telephone number
- ◆ A copy of your most recent heating/electric bill

Visit the City's website for [income guidelines](#).



## Thank you West Des Moines!

Due to the tremendous support of the community, we were able to provide holiday assistance for 520 low-income households in 2014. We appreciate your donations of toys, clothing and grocery food cards as well as your monetary contributions to support our holiday assistance programs.

Thank you also to all of the wonderful organizations and individuals who participated in the 2014 Adopt-A-Family Program which matched 209 families with 129 sponsors. The families were very *grateful* for your support!

## Santa At The Station Party

Santa arrived early this year for many low-income children. Over 65 boys and girls from four to six years of age attended a special party with their parents on Saturday, December 6, at the fire station on Railroad. The event was sponsored by WDM Human Services, WDM Firefighters, WDM Police, WDM EMS and the WDM Kiwanis Club. Everyone was in uniform to welcome the children who enjoyed a special presentation from Silly Sally the Clown. The highlight of the party was when Santa arrived and distributed a special gift to each child. This annual gathering delights many children and helps brighten the holiday season for struggling families and their little ones.





## Holiday shopping spree!

For over 25 years, the Churches Outreach Group (COG) and WDM Human Services have worked together to provide a holiday shopping experience that allows low-income children, ages 8 to 12, to purchase gifts for family members.

Last December, 100 children along with volunteer chaperones met at the WDM Community Center where COG-participating churches provided donated dollars to purchase gift cards for the kids. The children were then matched with a chaperone and everyone traveled on buses provided by the WDM School District to a local superstore to shop. When the shoppers returned to the Community Center, wrapping stations were waiting so that each

gift could be wrapped and labeled for family members. Participants were then treated to a well-deserved lunch by the WDM Parks and Recreation Department!



## Attention Pet Owners: Licensing time is here

Pet licensing renewal notices will be mailed to existing license holders in West Des Moines, Clive and Urbandale in early February. For the past three years, all three cities used a private vendor to process animal licenses, but beginning this year, WDM City staff will be administering the WestPet Animal Licensing Program.

As a reminder, all dogs and cats of at least six months of age living in these three communities must be licensed. Renewals are accepted from January 1 to April 30 without penalty — late renewals are subject to a \$25 late fee. License applications must be accompanied by a copy of the animal's current rabies vaccination certificate and proof of spay/neutering if applicable.

Registration forms for new and unlicensed animals are available at [www.westpet.org](http://www.westpet.org). Questions? Call 273-0651 or e-mail WestPet at [westpet@wdm.iowa.gov](mailto:westpet@wdm.iowa.gov).

### 2015 Pet License Fees

(includes processing)

Altered Cat	\$17
Intact Cat	\$24
Altered Dog	\$19
Intact Dog	\$29

*Discounts are available for microchipped pets and service animals.*